

SPRING 2013

Dedication and Plan Bring Success for Lil' Stars

It is not easy to go back to school while raising a one and three-year-old and running a small business, but Rebecca Quintanilla of Lil' Stars Family Child Care Center has demonstrated it can be done. In her second year of YoungStar, with the support of her families and her YoungStar Technical Consultant, Rebecca achieved a 3 Star rating.

After weighing the many options with her consultant, Jamie Tramte Brassfield, Rebecca decided to focus on credit-based education. She applied for and received a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship to help cover the cost of completing credit-based instruction in early childhood education. Rebecca has observed that in her 12+ years of experience, the field has continued to change. By taking additional classes, she's been able to keep current and implement best practices.

Rebecca is already thinking about the improvements she wants to make to her program next year. "With the goals I have I want to move to the next step and try for a 4 Star rating," states Rebecca. Not only will she be looking to rise in stars, but she is also taking steps to transition from certification to licensure, so that she can provide high quality care for more children and families.



Aiden Peterson, age 5 of Rhinelander, plays with blocks purchased with YoungStar Micro-Grant funds.

Programs Use Micro-Grants to Improve Quality

Micro-Grant funds are available to programs participating in YoungStar who take part in quality improvement efforts. These funds, available once per year to programs that complete technical assistance, are meant to help programs meet their quality improvement goals.

The amount of the Micro-Grant will be determined by the type of program participating.

- * \$1000 for a licensed Group Child Care program or School Age program
- * \$500 for a licensed Family Child Care program
- * \$250 for a certified Family Child Care program

During the technical assistance process, a Technical Consultant will help the program complete all the steps necessary to receive Micro-Grant funds. Many programs choose to use their grant to purchase materials

for children. However, the Micro-Grant can be used in many ways. Grants can be used to pay for training, credit-based education, or to pay the costs of participating in the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program. Many programs also invest in adult resources, curriculum and assessment materials, and improvements to the physical environment. Others use their grant towards Registry Certificates or accreditation costs.

All questions should be directed to the Micro-Grant office.

Phone: 1-800-783-9322 extension 7272

Email: microgrants@wisconsinearlychildhood.org



Creating Portfolios with School-Age Children

An optional point in YoungStar can be earned by using portfolios for every child who is in regular attendance.* The primary purpose for portfolios is to document a child's growth and development over time.

Portfolios can provide a resource for guiding and supporting individual children, planning, and implementing a successful program experience. A portfolio is also helpful in sharing important information about children individually to families and other professionals when appropriate.

Portfolios for school-age children should contain two components:

- 1. Staff documentation of a child's participation in program experiences which will serve as an important process of program planning and implementation.** This may appear in the form of a developmental checklist. Staff can monitor the content of a portfolio to learn more about patterns of development and what they learn about children to evaluate current activity offerings and be able to plan new experiences that will help children build on talents, abilities and interests.
- 2. Representative samples of work done by a child.** A child can reflect on their experiences in the program and use those reflections

to make plans and set personal goals. This can include anecdotal records, photographs, work samples, or surveys that the child has taken about his or her experiences in the program, for example. School-age children should be involved throughout the process.

Staff should help parents understand how their children are growing and developing. Portfolio items can help parents recognize how programs are supporting children's development. Portfolios can become a focus of conferences with parents to help build strong partnerships between parents, children, and staff.

Programs should develop a program portfolio policy that is practical for the school-age program. The policy should identify the purpose of creating portfolios and what specific items may be included. This policy informs the teachers as well as the parents.

Portfolios can enhance professionalism in the program and will vary from child to child because of individual differences among children. The important part is to focus on the connection between children's needs and how program experiences can support the child's developmental needs.

*A child is "in regular attendance" if they attend the program more than half of the hours the program is open per week.

Programs Around Wisconsin Show Improvement in 2012

The distribution of programs that achieved a 3 Star rating increased from 14% in January 2012 to 22% in December 2012.

Providers rated January 2012		
Star	Number of Programs	Percentage
1	39	1%
2	2710	78%
3	488	14%
4	44	1%
5	206	6%
Pending	472	~
Total	3959	100%

Providers rated December 2012		
Star	Number of Programs	Percentage
1	18	<1%
2	3079	68%
3	1008	22%
4	138	3%
5	283	6%
Pending	315	~
Total	4841	100%

